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02/22/24 BIG PHARMA

COVID Vaccine Maker Sued Over Deaths + More

The Defender's Big Pharma Watch delivers the latest headlines related to pharmaceutical companies and their products, including vaccines, drugs, and medical devices and treatments. The views expressed in the below excerpts from other news sources do not necessarily reflect the views of The Defender. Our goal is to provide readers with breaking news that affects human health and the environment.

By The Defender Staff

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COVID Vaccine Maker Sued Over Deaths

Newsweek reported:

Pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca is facing a number of legal claims in the United Kingdom over deaths or debilitating injuries attributed to an adverse reaction to its COVID-19 vaccine. The roughly 80 claimants are part of a litigation group that says they are not anti-vaccination but are seeking compensation from the company beyond the £120,000 ($152,000) allocated through a government damage payment scheme.

The cases being brought are related to instances of Vaccine-induced Immune Thrombotic Thrombocytopenia (VITT), a rare condition that can cause life-threatening blood clots that block the flow to vital organs.

The first batch of lawsuits was filed in the U.K. High Court in December, with a second following in January, according to the litigation group. The group claims that AstraZeneca is liable for the injury and loss caused in the rare cases and that the lack of a "fair and adequate" compensation scheme left them "no choice" but to sue.

Among the claimants is Kam Miller, whose husband Neil died on May 1, 2021, at the age of 50 due to VITT. Lisa Shaw, a radio journalist, died shortly after receiving the AstraZeneca COVID vaccine in April 2021, which the litigation group said caused blood clots to develop in her brain.

The Mothers Fighting a Scandal Bigger Than Thalidomide: 'We Were Told the Medication Was Safe'

The Guardian reported:

In 2009, Emma Murphy took a phone call from her sister that changed her life. "At first, I couldn't make out what she was saying; she was crying so much," Murphy says. "All I could hear was 'Epilim'." This was a brand name for sodium valproate, the medication Murphy had been taking since she was 12 to manage her epilepsy.

Her sister explained that a woman on the local news had claimed that taking the drug during her pregnancies had harmed her children. She was appealing to other women who might have experienced this to come forward.

At that point, Murphy was a mother to five children, all under six, and married to Joe, a taxi driver in Manchester. "My kids are fabulous, all of them, but I'd known for years that something was wrong," she says. "They weren't meeting milestones. There was delayed speech, slowness to crawl, not walking. There was a lot of drooling — that was really apparent. They were poorly, with constant infections. I was always at the doctor with one of them."

The call between Murphy and Janet Williams was the start of an incredible partnership. It led to the report published this month by England's patient safety commissioner, Dr Henrietta Hughes, which recommended a compensation scheme for families of children harmed by valproate taken in pregnancy. Hughes has suggested initial payments of £100,000 and described the damage caused by the drug as "a bigger scandal than thalidomide". It is estimated that 20,000 British children have been exposed to the drug while in the womb.

Perhaps most crucially, they uncovered papers from the early 1970s that revealed the key decisions that informed how the drug would be prescribed. They found notes from the manufacturer, Sanofi, that stated that valproate could be teratogenic — harmful to fetuses. They also found the response from the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM), then the main decision-making body on new medicines, which concluded that the risk was low and that patients should not be informed, in order to avoid "fruitless anxiety."

More Teens Are Turning to Weight-Loss Drugs

NBC News reported:

Demi and Brenden are part of a growing number of teens turning to powerful new weight-loss medications. According to data from healthcare analytics platform PurpleLab, in 2023, about 4,000 prescriptions of semaglutide, sold under the brand names Wegovy and Ozempic, were written for children ages 12 to 17.

The decision to put a teenager on a weight-loss drug may sound extreme, but it falls in line with the latest recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics. Last year, the influential group added anti-obesity medications as part of its guidelines for treating obesity in kids ages 12 and up. Behavioral and lifestyle modifications — such as diet and exercise — are still considered the first line of treatment, but for kids and teens in which those aren't enough, pediatricians can now prescribe medication.

The AAP's recommendations, while welcomed by many doctors, were met with fierce pushback, including from groups concerned with eating disorders.

Other experts said they are concerned about the unintended consequences of the drugs, such as possible effects on growth and development. Dr. Dan Cooper, a pediatric pulmonologist at UCI Health in Irvine, California, co-wrote a paper outlining such worries.

Weight-Loss Drugs Could Boost U.S. GDP by 1% in Coming Years, Goldman Says

Reuters reported:

The widespread use of powerful new weight-loss drugs in the United States could boost gross domestic product by 1% in the coming years as lower obesity-related complications are likely to boost workplace efficiency, according to Goldman Sachs.

Some analysts have predicted the market for weight-loss drugs could reach $100 billion a year by the end of the decade, with Ozempic maker Novo Nordisk (NOVOb.CO) and Mounjaro producer Eli Lilly (LLY.N) leading the race.

The class of drugs, called GLP-1 agonists, is being keenly pursued by several companies and more could enter the market depending on clinical trials. The use of GLP-1s could increase by anywhere between 10 to 70 million consumers by 2028, Goldman Sachs said on Thursday.

The brokerage estimated that weight-loss drugs could bolster U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) by 0.4% in a scenario with 30 million users, and could rise to 1% with 60 million users.

Moderna Is Still Turning a Profit Even Though Fewer People Are Using Its Only Product

Quartz reported:

Moderna stock jumped 7% during premarket trading on Thursday after the pharma company, known for its mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, reported a profit of $217 million in its fourth quarter ending Dec. 31. The company's profit comes as a surprise to Wall Street, as it has reported a loss in the past two quarters and use of its only product available on the market has dwindled in the last year.

Only 22% of U.S. adults have received an updated COVID-19 vaccine, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Moderna says it managed to turn a profit last quarter by scaling back its production of COVID-19 vaccines, while at the same time increasing its market share. The pharmaceutical company expects to generate $4 billion in revenue in 2024 from its respiratory franchise, which includes its COVID-19 vaccine and an upcoming RSV vaccine.

Moderna said it expects to receive FDA approval for its RSV vaccine in the first half of 2024. The company is also developing a combined COVID and flu vaccine. Moderna has a total of 45 products in development.

America's Drug Overdose Crisis Has Profound Ripple Effects

Axios reported:

More than 4 in 10 Americans personally know someone who has died of an overdose, and an estimated 13% of the population have had their lives disrupted as a result, according to a new study in the American Journal of Public Health.

Why it matters: With more than 100,000 people dying from overdoses a year, America's drug crisis has undeniably altered millions of lives. But the study suggests that the epidemic's reach into American life has, if anything, been underestimated.

The big picture: As the drug epidemic has evolved and become deadlier, it has grown from a public health issue to a divisive political topic — both because of its emotional resonance with voters and because of the controversial nature of potential solutions, like expanded access to methadone treatment.

By the numbers: More than 125 million Americans know at least one person who has fatally overdosed, the RAND-led study projects. Between the lines: Most who reported knowing someone who died of an overdose said they actually knew multiple people who died from drugs.

Cancer Experts Call on Philanthropists to Help Fund 'Golden Age' of Research

The Guardian reported:

Leading cancer experts from around the world are calling on wealthy individuals and philanthropists to dig into their deep pockets to accelerate a new golden age of cancer research.

More than 50 senior scientists from the U.K., Europe, North America and Asia, including three Nobel laureates, say advances in artificial intelligence and other technologies have created a "unique opportunity" to transform cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment in the next 10 years.

In a "Letter to the World", the researchers called cancer a "defining health issue of our time" and argued that it deserves the same "massive global response" that swung into action during the COVID pandemic to produce tests, vaccines and treatments for the virus.

Globally, 18 million people are diagnosed with cancer each year and 10 million die from the disease. The number of cases is expected to rise 50% by 2040, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer. Recently, scientists have noted a sharp rise in cases among the under-50s.

Novavax Stock Jumps After Company Settles Dispute Over Canceled COVID Vaccine Purchase

CNBC reported:

Novavax on Thursday said it will settle a bitter arbitration dispute with Gavi, a nongovernmental global vaccine organization, over a canceled COVID vaccine purchase agreement.

Novavax could pay up to $475 million to the organization, but the total amount may be less if Gavi decides to order more shots from the cash-strapped company over the next five years.

Still, the settlement eliminates what some analysts considered one of the biggest uncertainties around the COVID shot maker, which is cutting costs amid doubts about its ability to remain in business and plummeting demand for COVID products worldwide.

Florida Policy Set Amid Measles Outbreak Alarms Vaccination Proponents

STAT News reported:

Florida state policy set amid a measles outbreak in Broward County has vaccination proponents aghast, with many saying it leaves unvaccinated children especially vulnerable to the highly contagious disease.

In a letter dated Tuesday about an outbreak at Manatee Bay Elementary School in Weston, located northwest of Miami and west of Fort Lauderdale, the state's surgeon general, Joseph Ladapo, said that while it is normal policy to tell unvaccinated children to stay home during an outbreak, the state department of health will leave the choice of whether to send susceptible kids to school up to their parents. Six measles cases have been reported at the school in the past week.

Due "to the high immunity rate in the community, as well as the burden on families and educational cost of healthy children missing school, DOH is deferring to parents or guardians to make decisions about school attendance," Ladapo said.

Public health experts were taken aback by seeing a state surgeon general effectively tell parents they can ignore what public health considers to be best practice for containment of a measles outbreak — though they acknowledged that the policy was in keeping with Ladapo's earlier pronouncements on COVID vaccines. He had repeatedly questioned the safety of the messenger RNA COVID shots made by Moderna and Pfizer, urged parents of healthy kids not to give them COVID vaccinations and, in early January, announced he was calling for a halt in the use of the mRNA COVID shots.

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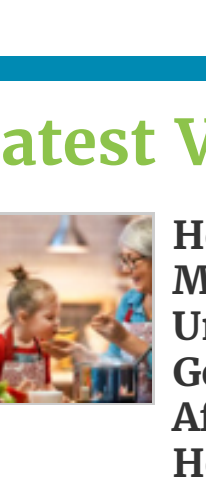

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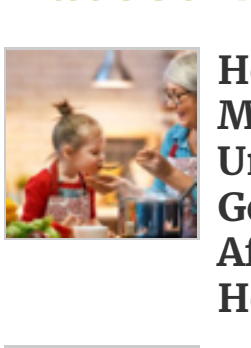

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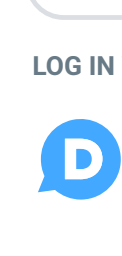

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10 Comments

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Best Newest Oldest

Paul Hastilow
2 months ago

As these reports show, the pharmaceuticals administered for whatever ailment
Cause more harm than benefit to the patients.
There needs to be a standard set, for compensation, on a sliding scale, (as everybody has different injuries in varying severity and degree.)
As regards " Measles", when I was a kid in the 50/60s, if one kid got measles in our street, the Moms, put all the kids "Together" (not isolated.!) to attain Herd Immunity, then after 10 days ,and lots of "Calamine Pink Lotion" to stop itching and scratching, we was back at school and immune to the next outbreak.!

Regarding the Weight drug issue, we are being "Hoodwinked" into concentrating on the Remedy .(back to front)…….we should sort out the Cause…! (front to back). Eliminate "Junk food" and Cancer Sugar Sodas….! In a child's diet.
To much onus it put on "Quick , efficient (not) Fast Foods"
Parents are not adequately protecting their Children from Obesity and Diabetic Foods…..!
Instead of funding "Big pHarma", rather spend that money your wasting on medication, to giving them Healthy food.!
When I was a Kid, if I was Hungry, I ate what was on my plate, or in my Lunch box.!……. Or I went Hungry to bed….!
It wasn't punishment, it was educating me , to eat good Wholesome food,
Not Genetically Modified Bread and Processed Junk food, that was Devoid of
Nutrition and Goodness.
You may think about why there is such a Prevalence ,these days for Cancer, Diabetes, Obesity….?
Simple….its life Style, and What we Eat.
Your poisoning you God given Temple.!….and your kids.

2 0 Reply

Ruthiemae
2 months ago edited

Bravo for Dr. Ladapo! He is the lone voice among state surgeon-generals to be principled enough to stand up for the health of the population when it comes to vaccines. His call to halt the deadly Covid vaccine was courageous and the absolutely right thing to do. And his latest action regarding the measles vaccine is a further step in the right direction. Hopefully, this action will open the door to more public questioning about the measles and other vaccines and ultimately lead to an unveiling of what's really going on. He is truly bucking the system by taking on the sacred cow of the childhood vaccines. The dam holding up the vaccine paradigm has not yet burst, but it's really starting to crack.

2 0 Reply

CastleConnell → Ruthiemae
2 months ago

That is a brave move in line with good health practice, allowing children to acquire lifetime natural immunity. I hope he has a good buffer system, because the more he stands up and stands out, the more he will be targeted. I would not be surprised if the media put out skewed stats and blamed him for infections. If he sticks to his guns though, as children move through the illness unscathed, parents will understand that lots of shots are not the gateway to health.

2 0 Reply

drw22
2 months ago

Go surgeon general, Joseph Ladapo! He's one of the few people in charge of health who understands how the immune system works.

2 0 Reply

Ruthiemae
2 months ago edited

When I was a child, the kids in our family all got the mumps, measles and chickenpox and we all came through just fine in very short order, no vaccines needed. It would be good if those who counsel individual choice regarding use of the measles vaccine, for example, point to some time-tested, non-toxic, and natural ways to treat it if it arises. I don't remember my mother giving us anything in particular, but I'll bet practitioners of natural medicine know of therapies that work.

1 0 Reply

Peter van der Stam → Ruthiemae
2 months ago

If my memory is still going well, in the 50's and 60's the hygene level of the people shot up with proper (not anymore) clean water .
This caused an enormous, positive up-grade of peoples health.
It certainly was NOT the vaccines responsible for the better health of the population.

0 0 Reply

CastleConnell
2 months ago

Everyone I knew got measles as a kid, there was zero panic by parents. And, lifetime immunity was the result including passed on immunity for a newborn up to about the age of one. Not so with a vaccinated mom, her baby will be vulnerable because she will not pass on immunity if she had the shot. Not fair to babies. If you live in a third world country and are deficient in nutrients like vitamin A, that is a problem if the kid gets measles, their mortality risk goes up, so a shot makes sense. Unless of course, Gates decides to offer good nutrition and sanitation in lieu of Pharma shots, but then he would not make any money.

1 0 Reply

Peter van der Stam → CastleConnell
2 months ago

Also, it are the vaccinated kids who get the disease.

0 0 Reply

RighteousRants
2 months ago

And our representatives in Washington have given Big Pharma a free pass so they cannot be sued, no matter what they do.

0 0 Reply

Voyt Regnal
2 months ago

Two headlines from above:

"COVID Vaccine Maker Sued Over Deaths" and..
"Moderna Is Still Turning a Profit Even Though Fewer People Are Using Its Only Product"

..conclusion: these court cases do not change anything.😦

0 0 Reply

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